

## **9 FAM PART IV Appendix D, 600 DOMESTIC AUTOMATED SYSTEMS**

*(TL:VISA-267; 04-25-2001)*

### **9 FAM 601 INTRODUCTION**

*(TL:VISA-119; 7-3-95)*

There are several automated systems in use domestically to which reference is made by their acronyms in telegrams from the Department. A brief description of each is set forth below.

### **9 FAM 602 ICARS (IMMIGRANT CONTROL AND REPORTING SYSTEM)**

*(TL:VISA-119; 7-3-95)*

a. The Immigrant Control and Reporting System (ICARS) has been operational since 1981, replacing the former method of recording allocations manually in ledgers. In brief, it computerizes the collation of recorded demand and the subsequent allocation of visa numbers (en bloc, rather than by specific numbers as in the past). This permits ready administration of the complex series of annual and other numerical limitations on immigrants, subdivided by preference category and country, which are set by the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). ICARS also maintains workload statistics for immigrant and nonimmigrant visas issued at foreign service posts worldwide.

b. The major benefits of ICARS are more readily available information, earlier allocations, and improved operational efficiency and accuracy.

### **9 FAM 603 VICTARS (VISA INFORMATION CONTROL, TRACKING, AND REPORTING SYSTEM)**

*(TL:VISA-267; 04-25-2001)*

a. The Visa Information Control, Tracking, and Reporting System (VICTARS) is a menu-driven, interactive data base management system designed to aid the Visa Office (VO) in controlling, tracking, and reporting file room contents and activities. Case-specific cables and correspondence sent out by VO will contain a VICTAR case number as a reference. The VICTAR case number should always be referenced in replying to inquiries from the Visa Office.

b. VICTARS, as an electronic filing system, serves several purposes. First, it enables officers in VO to look up, select, and maintain, in an electronic data base, relevant information pertaining to case files that are on hard copy in the file room. It assists them in identifying whether a case file regarding an individual already exists in the system, permits them to create new files and amend previously entered ones, and allows them to request the specific file they need from the file room.

c. This system also allows most of the file searching and accountability activities which were formerly performed manually to be done electronically. This saves time for both VO officers and the file room personnel, thus decreasing the response time for inquiries and other actions. It assists file room personnel in performing and controlling the file check-in/check-out, remoting, and purging functions, as well as identifying the location of any particular file at any given time. As an information management system, it permits quick response through automated name-checks and file searches, a cross-reference capability, and a uniformly applied purging system that minimizes the number of files which must be maintained.

d. Not least, VICTARS assists managers in monitoring pending case-related activities by providing them with a series of reports that assess workload and productivity and are useful in planning and controlling work. It also enables managers to review electronically individual case files in order to monitor actions taken.

## **9 FAM 604 IVIS (IMMIGRANT VISA INFORMATION SYSTEM)**

*(TL:VISA-267; 04-25-2001)*

a. Originally called Transitional Immigrant Visa Information System (TIVIS), IVIS is the computer program written to support operations at the Transitional Immigrant Visa Processing Center (TIVPC) prior to the establishment of the National Visa Center at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. It was designed to centralize the processing of over 4,000 petitions a day while making available IVACS-compatible files for data transfers.

b. IVIS accepts, processes, and stores information taken from approved petitions received from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). At the time of entry, the approval information is screened by the system to ensure that there are no internal logical or legal conflicts (e.g., Does an IR-1 petition show “married” as the marital status?). IVIS then determines whether the priority date of the petition is current or non-current (e.g., within the “qualifying date”), assigns a post-specific case number and creates a case record. Discrepancy codes may be entered at the same time to flag problem cases for further review. (Discrepancy codes identify potential problems such as a possible mistake in priority date or classification, etc.) Bar-code labels are then printed, and the case proceeds to the next stage of processing.

c. If the case is current, it is processed through the Packet 3 phase (e.g., mailing of Packet 3 to applicant or attorney) and the case (e.g., petition and any associated documents) is shipped to post. If not current, the case is maintained in file and each month is compared to any new qualifying dates assigned by the Department. When cases become current, they are listed on the print-out generated by the “Qualifying Date Global Update Report.” They are then retrieved from the files and sent through the Packet 3 and shipment-to-post phases.

d. The shipment-to-post phase includes a final quality control examination, the alphabetization of the files and the generation of a computer file for those posts with IVACS or the printing of the OF-224B card for non-automated posts. The generation of the file for IVACS posts is a process which includes some data modification to ensure case information is transferred in IVACS-compatible format. The file is then loaded onto a computer tape for later shipment with the files or is electronically transferred directly to posts.

e. As a final packing step, the case file bar code is read into the system as each file is placed in a box for shipment. Any files that do not belong with the shipment are rejected by the system, and a report is generated automatically to ensure the shipment is complete.